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Top Level College Administrators Meet for Conference

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DAYTON, OHIO, March 25, 1974 --- America's institutions of higher learning, as is widely known, are caught in a squeeze between dwindling income and soaring costs.

In face of this situation, how can institutions maintain human values and improve educational quality?

To answer this question, top level administrators from a number of the nation's colleges and universities will meet, April 17-19 at Nordic Hills Country Club and Conference Center in Chicago, with some of education's most articulate spokesmen in a conference called "More for Less: Academic Planning with Faculty without New Dollars."

According to J. N. Nesmith, Assistant Provost at UD and Chairman of the Conference, "Given the fact of financial retrenchment, the critical question is how can we, not just maintain, but enhance human values along with academic and educational quality."

At the conference's initial session, the problem will be defined by Stephen K. Bailey, Vice President of the American Council on Education, who has spoken and written widely on the questions of value and accountability in higher education.

Bailey, according to Nesmith, "is the most eloquent of the chief spokesmen of higher education on the unanticipated consequences of certain management decisions." Bailey has developed this theme forcefully in the article "Combatting the Efficiency Cultist" in Change Magazine last year and at last October's meeting of the American Council on Education. "As an economist and an educator," Nesmith points out, "Bailey has not just warnings but concrete suggestions."

Another economist speaking at the conference is Earl F. Cheit, University of California (Berkeley) and the Carnegie Task Force. Cheit has done, under the sponsorship of the Ford Foundation, two studies ("The New Depression in Higher Education" and "The New Depression; Two Years Later"), in which he studied 100 institutions in 1969-70 and again in 1971-72 to see how they faced their financial problems. In the second volume, he touched on the implications for purpose and quality in the midst of an economic crunch, a theme he will develop at the conference.

As an institution's dollar resources decline, it must make fuller use of its human resources. How to do this will be discussed at the conference by Virginia Smith, director of the Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education. This fund was established by Congress in 1972 to encourage institutions to change their incentive structures so faculty can be more fully rewarded for involvement in the teaching-learning process.

Among other speakers at the conference will be David G. Brown, provost of Miami University, who will treat the issue of finding new dollars in old budgets, and George Kaludis, fiscal vice president of Vanderbilt University, author of "Strategies for Budgeting."

Nesmith is now in his third year at UD working in academic planning and development. He sees the genesis of "More for Less" lying in his being caught up in general problems on a local level and in his seeking out the experts on these problems. After beginning to plan a meeting of these experts, he was invited by the Society for College and University Planning to extend these plans to a conference to be sponsored by them. The result of a planning committee, which includes national representation from private and public, large and small institutions, was "More for Less."